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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 002135

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SNAR](#) [SP](#)  
SUBJECT: TOP SPANISH LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL GETS  
FIRST-HAND LOOK AT U.S. INTERAGENCY EFFORTS TO FIGHT  
TERRORISM AND NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING

REF: 2006 MADRID 2282

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Classified By: CDA Hugo Llorens for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (c)

11. (C) SUMMARY. Joan Mesquida, Director General of Spain's Unified Command of the Spanish National Police and Civil Guard, traveled to Miami and Washington the week of November 5 to meet with various members of the U.S. interagency involved in the fight against terrorism and narcotics trafficking. In Miami, Mesquida's delegation met with representatives of U.S. Southern Command, the Joint Interagency Taskforce South (JIATF-S), the U.S. Coast Guard, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, and Customs and Border Protection. In Washington, the group held talks with senior officials from the FBI, DHS, DEA, and U.S. Secret Service. Mesquida reinforced Spain's commitment to the fight against terrorism and narcotics trafficking, and said that he was interested in pursuing further avenues of cooperation with the U.S. to build on our already excellent bilateral efforts.

The Charge hosted Mesquida and his deputies to a lunch on November 19 and pressed Mesquida and his team to work with us to build on momentum from the visit and focus on ways we can better cooperate on issues of supreme importance to both our countries. Mesquida said he would be interested in forming a working group to look at how we could improve the two-way flow of information on, for example, the large number of Islamic extremist cases Spain has under investigation. The Charge suggested looking at the possible creation of a joint multi-agency taskforce to work CT cases. We see other immediate areas for follow up on terrorist investigations and narcotics-related intelligence sharing. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) As reported in REFTEL, the Spanish Council of Ministers in September 2006 created the "Joint Command for the National Police and Civil Guard and appointed as its director Mesquida, who had been the head of the Civil Guard. The National Police (SNP) and Civil Guard (GC) are Spain's top law enforcement agencies, but intense inter-service rivalries dating back decades have hampered the effectiveness of their CT and counter-drug operations, and the units suffer from insufficient communication and collaboration. The creation of the new Joint Command and the appointment of Mesquida as its chief were intended to send a clear political signal that the two institutions had to work more closely

together, and that lingering institutional barriers were no longer acceptable to the Spanish government or Spanish people. Mission sections and agencies have generally been pleased with the progress made over the past year, and Director General Mesquida has become one of our key contacts on terrorism and narcotics issues.

13. (C) Mesquida was accompanied on the U.S. visit by his two deputies, Miguel Angel Fernandez-Chico Diaz of the SNP and Jose Manuel Garcia Varela of the GC. In Miami, the delegation appeared to be overwhelmed, awed, and amazed by the operations at SOUTHCOM, JIATF-S and the various DHS elements. Mission Spain has tried on numerous occasions to reinforce to the Spanish government the advantages of the interagency and taskforce concepts, and it was important for Mesquida to see first hand the level of U.S. interagency cooperation on the drug problem and to explore opportunities for Spain to get more involved. Mesquida was very impressed by how the various USG elements operate along the Florida coast. At one point he remarked, "You have a very impressive operation, and we in Spain need to be working more within our own government agencies and with the private sector." Director Mesquida received an invitation to visit Key West and learn more about the activities of JIATF-S.

//POTENTIAL AREAS FOR FOLLOW UP//

14. (C) In Washington, Mesquida's delegation held substantive meetings with FBI, DHS, USSS, and DEA. Mesquida emphasized that the fight against terrorism and narcotics trafficking was a priority for his country and reiterated the importance of good cooperation with the U.S. A few potential areas for follow up came out of the meetings.

-- While the public relations highlight of the meeting at FBI occurred when Director Mueller returned priceless antique

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maps that had been stolen from the National Library of Madrid and recovered by the FBI, Mesquida said that he would be willing to work with the U.S. on several ongoing terrorist investigations in Spain. Mesquida noted that his country currently has around 200 active investigations on suspected Islamic extremists that include 1400-1500 known or suspected terrorists. Mesquida said he would like to cooperate with the U.S. on some of these investigations.

-- During a briefing with ICE Assistant Secretary Julie Myers, Mesquida seemed very interested in DHS' Electronic Travel Document System (that allows DHS to be in electronic contact with U.S. Embassies and Consulates abroad to quickly verify the identity of migrants in the U.S. without proper travel documentation), and Mesquida said Spain might benefit from having a similar system. DHS officials said they would be willing to provide the GOS with more information on this and other programs if desired.

-- At DEA, Mesquida requested a better mechanism for the exchange of information and intelligence, particularly with a focus on financial investigations. DEA's Madrid Country Office can follow up with Mesquida's team to see what opportunities exist for better information sharing. Mesquida's deputies praised the level of cooperation between DEA and the GOS and said they hope to focus more on controlled deliveries and undercover operations and the increased sharing of real-time intelligence.

15. (C) During a November 19 lunch, the Charge discussed at length with Mesquida ways in which we might be able to refine our counter-terrorism cooperation. Mesquida said he would be interested in a working group to look at how we could improve the two-way flow of information on, for example, the large number of Islamic extremist cases Spain has under investigation. In addition, he accepted the Charge's suggestion that we look for an appropriate case or circumstance (perhaps the rapidly increasing Pakistani

presence and associated illegal activities such as alien smuggling) where the U.S. and Spain could bring a taskforce concept to bear. The Charge also suggested the creation of a joint multi-agency taskforce to work CT cases.

//COMMENT//

16. (C) Mission Spain appreciates the cooperation of Washington agencies involved in this visit. We have a strong counter-terrorism and law enforcement relationship with Spain, but we can make it better if we continue to think outside the box and actively pursue information sharing initiatives that bring mutual benefit.  
LLORENS